

Dear Sacred Heart Parish and Community Presidents and Past Presidents, fellow parishioners and PPC representatives,

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) surveyed the parishioners regarding the Dynamic Catholic Book Programs at each mass on the weekend of June 4/5 this year. I am attaching a summary of the results of that survey for your review. It is one page long and we are hopeful that you will appreciate the impact the Dynamic Catholic Book Program has had in our parish. The PPC tallied the surveys and discussed the option of continuing the Dynamic Catholic Book Program for this Christmas. The PPC is pleased with the results and it is only with your continued financial support that we can continue the Book Program this year. One of the members of the Parish Pastoral Council who is also a member of your organization has the information in the survey summary as well and can answer questions you might have.

As you know, The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) of the Church of the Sacred Heart was introduced to the Dynamic Catholic Book Program founded by Matthew Kelly two years ago. This program is dedicated to inspire Catholics to improve the way we practice our Catholic faith. The basic idea is to give a gift to the parishioners at Christmas (or Easter) when more people come back to church. This gift has no strings attached, just an open and generous opportunity to plant a seed and an invitation to come back again.

Through the generosity of several parish and community groups, The Knights of Columbus, The Altar Rosary Society, FAASH, the KofC Squires, the Columbiettes, and private donors the PPC was able to give each parish family a Christmas gift in 2014, which, as you know was a copy of the CD *Becoming the Best Version of Yourself* and in 2015 the book *Rediscover Jesus*. We have received many positive comments about the gift and we thank you again for your support.

The PPC would like to provide each family with a book this Christmas but we need your help. If you are able to support this effort with a donation of ANY amount the PPC would be most appreciative. We have chosen Matthew Kelly's newest book, which is available for us to order for a limited time for the cost of \$1.50 (includes shipping). We would like to order 1000 books and need to raise \$1500.00. We need to make a commitment by the end of October to be able to take advantage of this offer.

If your group is able to make a donation (or the promise of a donation), or if any of your members would like to make a private donation, you can speak to or email Don Bolger (Knights and Columbiettes), Nancy Pender (Rosarian), Jeff Pauls (Squires) and Pat Lapitan (FAASH). If you have any questions you can also contact Eileen Sanchez at 908-561-3850 or email eileenandmanny@comcast.net. Any checks should be made out to The Church of the Sacred Heart with Dynamic Catholic Book Program on the check. You can leave any donation with Lisa at the Parish Center in an envelope marked Attention: Eileen Sanchez for the PPC. Thank you for your consideration. Peace,

For the Parish Pastoral Council, Eileen Sanchez

Message from the Parish Pastoral Council

The members of the Pastoral Parish Council thank all the parishioners who took the time to respond to the survey on the Dynamic Catholic Book Program.

A review of the responses from 491 parishioners indicates that we should continue the program.

The majority of the responses came from parishioners over the age of 45 however we were pleased to have about 75 responses from younger parishioners. In a report from Dynamic Catholic from 2007, only 1% of American Catholics read a Catholic book. The Dynamic Catholic Book Program increased that number to 9.3% in 2012. That is a 900% increase in just five short years. Your responses indicate that 27% of you read the book distributed at The Church of the Sacred Heart this year. That's way ahead of the national average of 1% almost 10 years ago. 17% of you shared the book with others and 55% of you kept it. So, if you still haven't read it, dust it off and READ!

Self-reporting of improved spiritual habits are impressive:

- more frequent attendance at Sunday Mass; **8%**
- attending daily Mass more often; **7%**
- more frequent reception of the Eucharist; **6%**
- more frequent use of the Sacrament of Confession; **12%**
- increased prayer; **30%**
- increased scripture reading; **20%**
- Increased care of others; **24%**

The PPC also read and saved all comments that were written on the survey. Many of the suggestions align with the goals of Whole Community Catechesis/Faith Formation Program starting in the parish this Fall.

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) of the Church of the Sacred Heart was introduced to the Dynamic Catholic Book Program founded by Matthew Kelly two years ago. This program is dedicated to inspire Catholics to improve the way we practice our Catholic faith. The basic idea is to give a gift to the parishioners at Christmas. Through the generosity of several parish and community groups, The Knights of Columbus, The Columbiettes, The Altar Rosary Society, FAASH, the Squires, and private donors the PPC has been able to continue the Dynamic Catholic Book Program.

It is our hope and plan to continue the Dynamic Catholic Book Program through the continued support of these parish and Catholic community organizations. Private donations are accepted.

OPEN HOUSE - Are you a 6th, 7th or 8th grader looking to find the right school? Come visit us for our Open House to meet faculty, students and parents who love Mother Seton and want to share it with you. **Mother Seton Regional High School**, 1 Valley Road, Clark. Sunday, September 25, from 1:00-3:00PM.

ANNUAL MUM SALE - The South Plainfield Knights of Columbus Council #6203 will be selling the high quality mums in various colors at the SP Rescue Squad located at 2506 Plainfield Avenue, from 9AM, to 3PM, Saturday and Sunday, **September 24 & 25, and October 1 & 2**. For Large Mum orders, call Gerry Butrico at 908-346-0320 to arrange delivery. Prices are \$7 for 8 inch pots and \$25 for large pots with beautiful blooms. This fundraiser supports the Knights various charitable works. Get them while supplies last and thank you for your support.



WITNESSES TO FREEDOM

BLESSED MIGUEL PRO

A holy site of visitation
on our Parish Pilgrimage to
OLG & Mexico, Oct 29-Nov 4



“Viva Cristo Rey!”

As he faced a firing squad for serving the Catholic faithful in Mexico at a time when Catholicism was outlawed and severely persecuted, Fr. Miguel Pro of the Society of Jesus made a request. He asked to have a moment to pray on his knees, then he stood up, stretched out his arms in the imitation of Christ on the cross and submitted himself to his martyrdom, shouting “Viva Cristo Rey!” This moment was photographed, and so we can look into the face of a martyr at the moment of his execution. What is astonishing about the images is the serenity with which Blessed Miguel submits himself to the state. He does not respond with violent resistance, because he is at peace with God. From that place of peace, the martyr triumphs over tyranny. Government cannot take away his inner freedom, the freedom that belongs to any person who submits himself totally to God.

Due in part to Blessed Miguel’s witness, the Mexican government was shamed and an uprising gained the strength to stand up to religious persecution, as well as other injustices. He did not know it at the time, but his death inspired a larger defense of political and religious freedom that has since permitted the Church to live more publicly her call to holiness.

Freedom through surrender is a paradox that is hard to understand and at times harder to live. Nonetheless, we are all called, like Blessed Miguel, to live in the freedom that only comes through an imitation of Christ’s faithful obedience.

Blessed Miguel’s life and death remains a witness to complete surrender to Christ in a way to which we might struggle to relate. Yet, we are all called to order our lives to Christ. We may not be asked to die for our faith, but we are asked to give each moment of the day to the Lord. This capacity requires freedom from sin, freedom from selfishness, freedom from all those things that stand between us and God.

Blessed Miguel Pro reminds us that even in extreme circumstances, we find true freedom when we live first for Christ. That witness, when adopted in our lives, may even inspire others to similar acts of love.

Blessed Miguel Pro, pray for us!



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**PRAY FOR PEACE,
UNITY,
FREEDOM** 